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THE PAST MARCHES ON

By GEORGE MORGENSTERN

MAY 1 '53

IF HISTORY is to be considered the process of consolidating the blunders of the past, the Eisenhower Administration need disappoint no one. It is busy validating, one by one, the promises and myths that it inherited from Roosevelt and Truman. The campaign talk about "the mess in Washington" assumed that the mess had developed within the last year or two, and was confined to a little routine corruption here and there. But the mess has been in the making for more than half a century.

At the end of the 19th Century the United States began to stir with those promptings of imperialism and altruism which have worked to the mischief of so many puissant states. The sinister Spaniard provided a suitable punching bag. Two days before McKinley went to Congress with a highly misleading message which was an open invitation to war, the Spanish government had agreed to the demands for an armistice in Cuba and American mediation. There was no good reason for war, but there was war anyway. We wound up the war with a couple of costly dependencies, but this was enough to intoxicate the precursors of those who now swoon on very sight of the phrase "world leadership".

McKinley testified that in lonely sessions on his knees at night he had been guided to the realization that we must "uplift and civilize and Christianize" the Filipinos. He asserted that the war had brought new duties and responsibilities "which we must meet and discharge as becomes a great nation on whose growth and career from the beginning the Ruler of Nations has plainly written the high command and pledge of civilization". This sort of exalted nonsense is familiar to anyone who later attended the evangelical rationalizations of Wilson for intervening in the European war, of Roosevelt promising the millenium, with the four freedoms thrown in for the dog, of Eisenhower treasuring the "crusade in Europe" that somehow went sour, or of Truman, Stevenson, Paul Douglas, or the *New York Times* preaching the holy war in Korea.

It has been considered clever in recent times to deride certain Republicans for wishing to retreat to the days of McKinley. But the plain fact is that the country has never left the road onto which he wobbled. War, which in 1898 had been a summer's holiday, became a recurrent affliction, until today the country is in the state of a patient who, after three severe coronaries, looks forward without hope to the one which will do him in.

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WILSON HAD SOME moments of lucidity which persuaded him "that the objects which the statesmen on both sides have in mind in this war (No. 1) are virtually the same". Later, he accommodated his Calvinistic morals to a more congenial view: on April 2, 1917, he sensed "the pride of those who know the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and might . . ." Since then this privilege has become chronic.

Of course, this war was to proceed according to a magic formula whereby it would become the last war in history. This has become the *ignis fatuus* that has beckoned American internationalists into every war since. The idea was expounded by Wilson in these terms: "I am proposing that all nations henceforth avoid entangling alliances which would draw them into competitions of power, catch them in a net of intrigue and selfish rivalry, and disturb their own affairs with influences intruded from without. There is no entangling alliance in a concert of power. When all unite to act in the same sense and with the same purpose all act in the common interest and are free to live their lives under a common protection."

In short, international organization for collective security was the answer. Wilson tried it out on the Senate in 1919 with results which have been variously portrayed. Sen. Lodge, who had been willing enough for war, observed, "We may set aside all this empty talk about isolation. Nobody expects to isolate the United States or make it a hermit nation. But there is a wide difference between taking a suitable part and bearing a due responsibility in world affairs and plunging the United States into every controversy and conflict on the face of the globe."

Despite the Senate's rebuff to this automatic device for insuring American participation in every war, the dream of a security that should be "collective" was treasured in numerous breasts. Henry L. Stimson, always a firebrand, tried to persuade President Hoover in 1931 that Japan's behavior in Manchuria warranted a resort to economic sanctions and close collaboration, if possible, with other nations, involving a willingness to accept the predictable consequence of war if sanctions failed. But Mr. Hoover would not agree; so Mr. Stimson hurried off to solicit the incoming President of an opposition party, F. D. Roosevelt.

Roosevelt and Hull were ahead of the League of Nations in imposing economic sanctions on Italy in 1935, and, after the conquest of Ethiopia, they stubbornly clung to the Stimson prescription of non-recognition. In 1937 Roosevelt expressed his desire to "quarantine" aggressors, but, as Sumner Welles sadly recounts, it proved "wholly impossible for him for a period of exactly four years to carry out the policy that he himself believed to be

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vitally important to our security". That is, Roosevelt was not liberated from the restraints of public opinion until he had succeeded, by what Mr. Justice Frankfurter has chosen to call a "series of complicated moves", in maneuvering us into Pearl Harbor.

These complicated moves were, indeed, so devious that it took a Congressional committee many months to listen to 10 million words of testimony that hardly outlined what had occurred. In all the welter of words two statements possess especial significance. One was Roosevelt's confidence to Prime Minister Churchill not quite four months before Pearl Harbor: "I may never declare war; I may make war. If I were to ask Congress to declare war, they might argue about it for three months." The other was the statement of Stimson, situated opportunely in 1941 as Secretary of War: "The question was how we should maneuver them (the Japanese) into firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves."

IF THE AMERICAN people fail to comprehend this sequence of events, the explanation may lie in Woodrow Wilson's account of how the German people were taken into war in 1914. "Such designs", said he, "can be successfully worked out only under cover where nobody has a right to ask questions."

Mr. Wilson maintained that such cabals are happily impossible where public opinion commands full information concerning all the nation's affairs. But where is the illumination when a restricted group of military men and civilian officials so concert their plans and actions that one may see, as did Lincoln, the "framed timbers" without knowing precisely what goes on beyond the walls? And what of the vast apathy of an uninformed multitude content to substitute a 21 inch screen for the intellect?

Add to these the operations of an organized propaganda capable, apparently, of doping Americans into belief in any myth, and there is formidable reason why public opinion should be so stupefied and stultified that the nation can be led from war to war in pursuit of ever retreating goals. Yet, despite the general numbness, Americans, surveying the results of half a century of intermeddling, dimly perceive that all is not well.

It is certain that even Republicans in office can see certain effects of recent policy. They can discern that Roosevelt's representations of the mechanics of power were spurious, in that he lit on the wrong adversary. They can see that his prospectus of the fruits to be gathered from war was wholly fraudulent. They can smell something fishy about the means employed to put the United States into war at Pearl Harbor. They can sense the corroded morals of Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam.

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They can see that such latter day saints as Gen. Marshall, Bedell Smith and Eisenhower himself are but plaster effigies. They have a hunch that the UN is a papier-maché front. They can hardly escape the knowledge that Truman promoted the Korean horror in contravention of the Constitution and the public law. They can savor the irony of having fought a world war to destroy the partners in the anti-Comintern pact only that the United States might assume leadership in a new anti-Comintern pact.

THIS SENSE OF FRUSTRATION was notably keen as a Republican Administration moved in the last few months to verify and confirm the New Deal legacy of idiocy. There was a smothered protest when Gen. Smith was appointed Undersecretary of State, for he was a key man in the calculated triple fumble in the War Department backfield on the eve of Pearl Harbor which made possible the success of the Japanese "surprise". There was an instinctive revulsion even among Republican Senators, who seemingly can absorb any amount of punishment, when the new President forwarded for approval the draft of a resolution which, in effect, proclaimed the wisdom and nobility of the secret diplomacy of Roosevelt and Truman.

The outcry was shrill in the wrangle over confirmation of Charles E. Bohlen, counselor of the Acheson State Department, as Eisenhower's Ambassador to Russia. This man was a symbol of the diplomacy that produced the world mess. A participant in every conference from Teheran through Potsdam, he contemptuously informed Republican senators that it was idle to expect him to direct a word of criticism toward Roosevelt.

Whether the United States is, in fact, a captive of the errors and betrayals of the past may be doubted. But it is hardly in dispute that an all-pervasive propaganda has established a myth of inevitability in American action: All wars were necessary, all wars were good. The burden of proof rests with those who contend that America is better off, that American security has been enhanced, and that prospects of world peace have been improved by American intervention in four wars in half a century. Intervention began with deceit by McKinley; it ends with deceit by Roosevelt and Truman.

Perhaps we would have a rational foreign policy, serviceable to the United States, if Americans could be brought to realize that the first necessity is the renunciation of the lie as an instrument of national policy. Those who say that it is an idle exercise to sift the ashes of past events are all too frequently fearful of the truths that would be screened out in the sifting. The most disheartening fact about the new administration is its disinclination to poke among the clinkers.

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HUMAN EVENTS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor* FRANK CHODOROV, *Associate Editor*

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President's Peace Plan: The tales told by our returning POWs have sharply diminished the early enthusiasm for Ike's challenge to Soviet Russia. Obviously our Red enemies are not sending back all our sick and wounded; there remain lots more in their hospitals. Also, from the lips of our freed GIs, evidence accumulates about atrocities and slaughter of prisoners. All this produces a sickening feeling that despite the fine words of the President, further dealing with the enemy will prove just "more of the same".

Hence there is much developing opinion that — to attain peace — the President should take a much tougher line. It is strongly rumored that the President had planned to talk in even more conciliatory terms in his speech, but that the strong public reaction to Dulles' "appeasement talk" (in that famous off-the-record meeting with reporters) forced him to delete many soft words. Obviously, the soft line does not work in dealing with the Reds. When did it ever? — is the unanswerable question.

Much more attention is directed to Senator Knowland of California. On the morrow of Ike's speech to the editors, Knowland raised the ante by a strong speech in San Francisco calling on the UN to test Russian good faith — to demand free elections that might unite Korea, and free elections in Poland and Communist China. In the past forty-eight hours, the Californian has gone further saying that the Russians should withdraw from Poland, if any enduring settlement is to be made in Germany. Only if the Red Army is out of Poland, says Knowland, can Germany be relatively secure. Since Knowland is head of the powerful Senate Majority Policy Committee, his words carry great weight. "Raising the ante" gains more ground towards a peace settlement than "sweet talk" — so runs a current thought on Capitol Hill.

Not Merely Gossip: Earl Browder, former head of the American Communist Party, reportedly has proved a cooperative witness before Congressional committees recently. Browder was ousted from the Communist Party by Moscow, when the Kremlin changed its line. Those who have talked with the former Red leader say he has moved farther away from the Moscow orbit and is now most useful to probers. On one point, Browder reportedly is in general agreement with none other than Senator Jenner of Indiana. Browder is said to feel (as Jenner often said a year ago) that the Japanese Peace Treaty could make it easier for Communists to infiltrate and take over power in Japan.

● The "filibuster" now used by the Democratic "liberals" against the tidelands legislation might conceivably stop the Bricker Amendment this session — although the latter measure is said to command the support of two-thirds of the Senate. It is feared that the bill (designed to protect our constitutional rights against encroachment by foreign treaties) will run into "filibuster" tactics from the same Democratic "liberal" groups. If the Amendment gets into a parliamentary snarl late in the session, it might have to go over until next year.

● President Eisenhower rarely attends private parties, but he was present at one recently which has caused much chatter among Capital gossips. It was held at the home of General Omar Bradley. On April 16, the New York *Journal-American* ran a photo of some of those at the party. They were: the President, Generals George C. Marshall, Emmett O'Donnell and Walter Bedell Smith; and the three young sons of toy manufacturer Louis Marx of New York. The three cute youngsters are named Spencer Bedell Marx, Emmett Dwight Marx and Bradley Marshall Marx and in the photo were seated on the laps respectively of the President, Undersecretary "Beedle" Smith and General Marshall. The caption described

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the Generals as godfathers of the Marx children. Later, the caption said, the party moved on to the White House.

Snobs in the Capital wonder how the President and Undersecretary of State got to know the Marxes. Society page reporters say it was Mrs. Anna Rosenberg, recently Defense Manpower Secretary, who introduced them. Other observers recalled a rumor that the President was a stockholder in the Marx firm. Mr. Drew Pearson, the columnist, says that this isn't so, but that Ike did invest in the Charnall Lipstick Company, a Marx concern. The investment, however, did not turn out too well, says Pearson.

State Department Shakeup: When Senator Karl Mundt demanded a shakeup in the State Department and elimination of the old Acheson crowd, he meant it. For a group of key members of Congress are resolved to accomplish this mission themselves by curtailing appropriations — if Mr. Dulles fails to do so.

Mundt reportedly was inspired to take his stand after studying the State Department lists of personnel. He noted that there had been so far this year virtually no change as compared with last year. Hence his outburst.

It was greeted with a severe counterattack by friends of Acheson and the holdovers in the State Department. One of the principal points made against Mundt's statement was that such a shakeup would deprive the State Department of its best Foreign Service officers and veteran career diplomats — the men who possess the diplomatic "know how", without which Dulles cannot operate.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. Professor James L. McCamy of the University of Wisconsin, in his scholarly book, *The Administration of American Foreign Affairs* (1950) showed that 77 per cent of the individuals in places of influence in the Department at that time had been in the Department less than 5 years. There is no evidence that this situation has changed since 1950. A glance at the classified section of the latest (March) telephone directory of the Department indicates that the picture drawn by Dr. McCamy is correct. On the first page of this section there are 44 names (including that of Dulles); but only seven are Foreign Service officers. Other pages have a similar composition.

But are the members of the old Acheson clique the only individuals capable of carrying on the staff duties of the Department? An old-line diplomat, recently retired, tells us that this is not so, that there are scores of good men, who in recent years have sought to voice the point of view compatible with GOP concepts rather than to curry favor with the Acheson crowd. As a matter of fact, our informant remarks, a majority of the staff would welcome the shakeup demanded by Mundt and his colleagues in the Senate.

Social Security: Two incidents of the past week lit up with grim humor the even grimmer subject of Social Security. Arthur Altmeyer's job was abolished in the recent process of turning the Federal Security Agency into its new Cabinet counterpart. His was one of the very few Social Security names with which the general public was familier. He was dubbed "Mr. Social Security". He was the chief front man at Congressional hearings and would testify for hours literally, in long, ponderous and unbelievably involved sentences, while legislators listened in glassy incomprehension.

But on April 11, it all came to an end. Altmeyer ceased to be the great Panjandrum of the system. He will get his Civil Service retirement pension, but abolition of his job came less than 30 days before his 62nd birthday. Had he been able to last out this month, there would also have been a "survivor's annuity" for his wife. The irony is this: Quirks in the Social Security Act often deprive pensioners of one benefit or another through the arbitrary working of the calendar. Sometimes it's only a matter of days. Many a bitter curse has been hurled at Altmeyer on these grounds.

Now Altmeyer himself has come a cropper in somewhat the same way. An old acquaintance of the ex-Commissioner observed: "Arthur has torn his pants on the same kind of barbed wire that has bothered other people. He has always claimed to have an absorbing interest in gerontology. This distressing incident should provide him with material for a new and indignant chapter for the textbooks."

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The other incident referred to above was this: A welfare lobbyist at lunch last week was discussing the Social Security investigation, being held by a sub-Committee of the House Ways & Means Committee under Rep. Curtis (Rep., Nebr.). The lobbyist was apprehensive. "Of course", he said, "I suppose the Social Security Act really is a kind of fraud, but it *had* to be in order to put it over. If the truth had ever been told *the principle* never would have been adopted!"

A British View: Rebecca West, famous British journalist, has launched a defense of American anti-Communist probes and hearings, in a series of articles in the London *Sunday Times* (April 5). It should be explained to our readers that Fair Deal propaganda working in conjunction with Communist propaganda has created in England and other foreign countries a myth of "American witch hunting", and a bogey of "McCarthyism". Rebecca West is well-known for her book on treason and is now studying subversive activities in the U.S. She attacks "anti-anti-Communists" with formidable irony:

" 'This animal is very wicked', wrote a French zoologist, 'it defends itself when it is attacked.' The United States is in this sense very wicked indeed. It keeps on defending itself. On discovering that it has forty Burgesses and MacLeans adorning its Civil Service, it actually dares to let an investigating committee (appointed for the very purpose of inquiring into such untoward events) ask how they obtained their positions." [Burgess and MacLean were the two British Foreign Office diplomats who disappeared, presumably beyond the Iron Curtain.]

"But anti-American propaganda", continues Miss West, "has firmly convinced the rest of the world that there is one phase of 'witch-hunting' which cannot be excused on grounds of self-defence. Most English-educated people have been hypnotized into a firm belief that the investigating committees have killed academic freedom in the United States, and that it is now impossible for a professor or teacher to obtain or hold a position unless his political views put him well to the right of Bloody Mary and the Bourbons. Fear, it is often said, is stalking the campus." Thereupon Miss West, drawing on the McCarran Committee Internal Subcommittee hearings of last September and October, brilliantly describes how it is the Communists who actually terrify those on the American campus seeking to defy their will.

Education Front: From *Facts in Education*, December, 1952, (P.O. Box 2056D, Pasadena, Calif.): "SIGNPOSTS OF FELLOW TRAVELLER: 1. Discredit all committees — local, State and Federal — investigating un-American activities.

2. Discredit all patriotic citizens and organizations, labeling them the 'lunatic fringe', psychopathic, subversive, Fascists, Communists.

3. Discredit all testimony given by former Communists, although they have broken with the party and testified under oath.

4. Oppose all loyalty oaths, especially those requiring a statement as to possible Communist affiliation, present or past.

5. Oppose any attempt to examine textbooks for possible socialistic slants or subversive content.

6. Oppose the dismissal of teachers and public employees whose loyalty to American tradition is in question.

7. Promote the UNESCO program in the schools, with its propaganda for world citizenship, world understanding and world government.

8. Accept the 'bigotry' racket disguised as 'brotherhood and tolerance'. (Racial and religious discrimination can never be eliminated as long as the flames of hate are fanned by those whose real objective is to pit class against class.)

9. Denounce, as an enemy of education, everyone who opposes the use of the public schools for indoctrination and propaganda purposes."

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Liberty or Equality, by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn. Caldwell, Idaho. The Caxton Printers, Ltd. $6.00. Reviewed by Frank Chodorov.

It is impossible to "turn back the clock". But it is possible to take a peek into the past. And, although nothing can be done to prevent the hands of the "clock" from rushing pell-mell into the future, the peek often suggests that the past contained elements preferable to what goes on or what is in the offing. The comparison makes one wonder whether our vaunted "progress" is not in fact deterioration.

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, an Austrian scholar, opens up a vista of the past that is not complimentary to "democracy", on the score of freedom. Defining freedom as the "greatest amount of self-determination which in a given situation is feasible, reasonable and possible", he finds that the monarchical and Catholic Europe of the last century was more favorable to it than modern "democracy". The hereditary monarch, he holds, was in fact the "father" of his people, impartial in his rulership and impervious to their foibles. Trained to his job, secure in his position, he acted as a foil to partisan politicians and self-seeking adventurers. He was not the government, he was the country. Under the circumstances, he lent a sense of stability to society, which favored both the development of a culture and the degree of "self-determination" which the tradition permitted.

The institution of monarchy precluded the myth of equality. Conceding that superiority resided in the monarch was an admission that natural inequalities exist among persons. It was expected that his government, his counsellors, would be of a higher cut in intelligence and integrity. Even the "royal opposition" (which might someday become the "royal government") was presumed to contain a qualified breed of men. This admission of disequality in human gifts was a force toward improvement, for it spurred on those whom nature had favored; "self-determination" had a better chance. Both the highly gifted and those of mediocre parts felt secure in their respective fields; over them a higher authority kept them from overstepping the bounds.

When the phrase "all men are created equal" was perverted into meaning that every man is as good as any other, and that therefore all were equally fit to rule, the inevitable consequence was the rise to the top of those least qualified for the job. For, under the processes of "democracy", political preferment became a matter of purchase of demagoguery, practices to which the more gifted do not readily lend themselves. Popular suffrage brought in its wake the pressure group, with its axe to grind, and government became its representative. The rule of numbers restricted "self-determination" to the area determined by the unrestrained will of the majority — which had to be the will of a coalition of pressure groups — and the will of the majority is always the will of the least scrupulous person who assumes leadership. Thus, the rise of the "fuhrer" is the inevitable end of "democracy". Egalitarianism can produce no other result.

The author is a Catholic, not only in faith but also in the tradition. It is difficult to follow him in his juxtaposition of Catholicism and monarchy, except that he insists that no fruitful discussion of political science can proceed from a negation of original sin. The fact that man is not perfect, of course, is the final justification for government; it is the fact upon which the fine-spun theories of anarchism fall apart. But, the doctrine of original sin is not indigenous to Catholicism, as the author admits. His argument for the Catholic point of view does not seem essential to his main point.

This is the kind of book, once you put your teeth into it, that holds you by its mere solidity. You are stunned by its audacity, attracted by its logic, conquered by its facts. You will argue about it for a long time after you have set it down. You may not accept its thesis, but you will surely think about it.

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